

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 BIB-01

EB-07 TRSE-00 COME-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /089 W

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P R 051430Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9147

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION BERLIN

USMISSION USNATO

AMCONGEN MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 4607

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO, UR

SUBJ: CEAUSESCU VISIT TO USSR

REF : BUCHAREST 4493; BUCHAREST 4394; BUCHAREST 4003;

MOSCOW 11759; MOSCOW 11937

1. SUMMARY. WE READ CEAUSESCU'S AUGUST 2 VISIT TO KISHINEV (CHISINAU), FIRST EVER OF ANY ROMANIAN HEAD OF STATE SINCE WWII, FOLLOWED BY SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH BREZHNEV IN CRIMEA (AUGUST 3), AS DRAMATIC GESTURE MEANT TO UNDERLINE CURRENT NORMALIZATION PHASE OF ROMANIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS AND SYMBOLIZE MODERATION OF HISTORICAL POLEMICS WHICH BROUGHT CPSU CC SECRETARY KATUSHEV TO BUCHAREST IN MAY. AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, OFFICIAL  
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ROMANIAN SOURCES DENY VISIT IMPLIES ANY BASIC POLICY

CHANGE, A VIEW WHICH SPARSE AND SOMEWHAT RESTRAINED MEDIA COVERAGE, PARTICULARLY OF BREZHNEV MEETING, WOULD TEND TO SUPPORT. WHILE OPTICS HAVE VISIBLY IMPROVED OF LATE, WE REMAIN SKEPTICAL THAT THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCES WHICH UNDERLIE THE SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONSHIP HAVE ALTERED. AS A CHINESE COLLEAGUE HERE HAS SPECULATED, VISIT MARKS A TACTICAL, NOT A STRATEGIC SHIFT. END SUMMARY.

2. IF CEAUSESCU TRULY WISHED TO BURY HISTORICAL HATCHET WITH SOVIETS, MOLDAVIAN SSR WAS CERTAINLY THE PLACE TO BEGIN, EVEN THOUGH HE MAY HAVE FELT A BIT UNCOMFORTABLE WITH MOLDAVIAN FIRST SECRETARY BODYUL WHOSE CRITICISM OF "REVISIONIST CURRENTS IN COMMUNIST AND WORKERS' MOVEMENT" AT JANUARY 1976 MOLDAVIAN PARTY CONGRESS WAS CLEARLY DIRECTED AT ROMANIAN LEADER. IN ADDITION, HISTORICAL BATTLE, ALTHOUGH MODERATED, HAS APPARENTLY NOT ENTIRELY SUBSIDED. IN PUBLIC ADDRESS AT IASI JUST PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR KISHINEV CEAUSESCU DECLARED ROMANIANS WOULD "REPULSE ANY ATTEMPT TO INSULT OUR PEOPLE BY INSULTING OUR FOREFATHERS", A REMARK PRESUMABLY DIRECTED ACROSS THE BORDER. ALSO ROMANIANS CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR POINTS VIA HISTORY LESSONS, E.G., MAGAZIN ISTORIC (JULY, 1976) CARRIES 1860 CONVERSATION BETWEEN ROMANIAN PRINCE ION CUZA AND RUSSIAN CONSUL IN IASI IN WHICH ROMANIAN LEADER REMINDS RUSSIAN THAT ROMANIANS ARE CONSCIOUS OF THEIR DUTY (AND WOULD FIGHT) SHOULD RUSSIAN TROOPS BE SENT INTO PRINCIPALITY.

3. PRESS COVERAGE OF VISIT HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL WITH KISHINEV PORTION OF TRIP RECEIVING MOST OF ATTENTION, WHILE CRIMEAN MEETING WITH BREZHNEV GIVEN LITTLE SPACE. PARTIAL EXPLANATION OF THIS MAY BE DUE TO COVERAGE OF VISIT BY SHORT-HANDED AGERPRES MOSCOW BUREAU. ACCORDING TO SCINTEIA FOREIGN EDITOR, NO LOCAL ROMANIAN JOURNALISTS WERE ALONG. ALL MENTION OF VISIT HAS NOW DISAPPEARED FROM ROMANIAN PRESS, PRESUMABLY BECAUSE CEAUSESCU IS ON VACATION. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY MFA THAT HE IS EXPECTED BACK ABOUT AUGUST 11.

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4. OFFICIAL ROMANIAN SOURCES, AS EXPECTED, ARE DENYING THAT VISIT SIGNIFIES ANY CHANGE IN POLICY. SCINTEIA FOREIGN EDITOR CAPLESCU TOOK LINE THAT ONE COULD NOT CALL THIS A RENAISSANCE SINCE SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONSHIP HAD NEVER BEEN ALL THAT BAD TO BEGIN WITH, A VIEW ALSO PUT FORTH BY MFA'S DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DIRECTORATE I

(SOCIALIST COUNTRIES). CAPLESCU SUGGESTED THAT, FORTIFIED BY VINDICATION OF ROMANIAN POLICY AT BERLIN, CEAUSESCU COULD NOW WELL AFFORD TO MAKE SUCH A GESTURE TO SOVIETS. OTHERS HAVE SIMPLY DISMISSED VISIT AS COSMETIC AND SUPERFICIAL. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SURVEY POPULAR OPINION ON VISIT SINCE ANTI-SOVIET TINGED NATIONALISM IS ONE OF FEW AREAS LEFT WHERE CEAUSESCU'S POLICIES STRIKE A POSITIVE CORD WITH THE POPULACE.

5. COMMENT: WITH THE MOLDAVIAN VISIT, CEAUSESCU HAS UNDERTAKEN A POLITICAL GYRATION SIMILAR IN DARING AND COMPLEXITY TO THE GYMNASTIC WONDERS THAT FELLOW COUNTRYMAN COMANECI PERFORMED IN MONTREAL. WHETHER HIS SKILL ON THE HIGH BAR IS OF THE SAME FLAWLESS CALIBRE, ONLY TIME WILL TELL. MEANWHILE, AS NOTED ABOVE, THIS ABRUPT TACTICAL CHANGE WILL SURELY RESULT IN SOME NATIONAL UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHAT HE IS UP TO. WHILE CAPLESCU SPECULATED HIS TRIP TO THE SOVIET UNION IS MADE FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH, WE AGREE WITH REFTTEL SPECULATION (MOSCOW 11759; MOSCOW 11937) THAT CEAUSESCU MAY INSTEAD BE IN POSITION OF AN ECONOMIC DEAMNDEUR. THE CHNINESE MILITARY ATTACHE HERE HAS SINGLED OUT THE BLACK SEA CANAL AND NEW CALARASI STEEL MILL PROJECTS AS AREAS WHERE ROMANIANS WOULD LIKE FURTHER SOVIET ASSISTANCE IN WAY OF MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY. HOWEVER, WE SEE NO INDICATION THAT ECONOMIC SITUATION HERE HAS DEGENERATED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT SUBSTANTIVE ROMANIAN CONCESSIONS WOULD APPEAR NECESSARY. RATHER, CEAUSESCU MAY BE INDULGING IN ANCIENT ROMANIAN ART OF PARLAYING AS LITTLE AS HE CAN GIVE FOR AS MUCH AS HE CAN GET. WE SUSPECT HE WILL FIND THE SOVIETS AS HARD BARGAINERS AS EVER AND THAT PRESENT PHASE OF SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONSHIP  
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WILL BE OF LIMITED DURATION.  
VIETS

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## Message Attributes

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